

Amendments to the Claims

Please enter the following claim amendments before calculating claim fees. These amendments cancel claims 3, 5, 13-15, 17, 19-28, 30-33, 35, 38, 40, 43-58, and 60-89.

1 (previously presented): A method of detecting a microorganism in an aqueous solution or suspension, the aqueous solution or suspension not comprising precultured microorganisms, the method comprising

mixing the solution or suspension with microspheres coated with antibodies or antibody fragments comprising an antigen binding site selective for the microorganism, to create a microsphere-solution/suspension mixture; then

evaluating the microsphere-solution/suspension mixture for agglutination, wherein the presence of agglutination indicates that the solution or suspension contains the microorganism.

2 (previously presented): The method of claim 1, wherein the solution or suspension is obtained from a food, an animal feed, or a water supply.

3 (canceled)

4 (previously presented): The method of claim 1, wherein the solution or suspension is obtained from a mammal.

5 (canceled)

6 (previously presented): The method of claim 1, wherein the solution or suspension is obtained from a specimen selected from the group consisting of urine, stool, sputum, bronchial aspirate, cerebrospinal fluid, pus or blood.

7 (previously presented): The method of claim 6, wherein the solution or suspension is whole blood or comprises a blood product.

8 (previously presented): The method of claim 7, wherein the solution or suspension is plasma or serum.

9 (previously presented): The method of claim 7, wherein the solution or suspension comprises a blood product that is substantially purified from other blood

products, the blood product selected from the group consisting of red blood cells, platelets, factor IX, factor VIII, albumin, and antibodies.

10 (previously presented): The method of claim 9, wherein the blood product is red blood cells or platelets.

11 (previously presented): The method of claim 9, wherein the blood product is platelets.

12 (previously presented): The method of claim 1, wherein the microorganism is a bacterium.

13-15 (canceled)

16 (previously presented): The method of claim 12, wherein the bacterium is selected from the group consisting of a *Staphylococcus* sp., a *Pseudomonas* sp., a *Listeria* sp., an *Enterobacteriaceae* species, a *Vibrionaceae* species, a *Clostridium* sp., a *Campylobacter* sp., a *Bacillus* sp., *Escherichia coli*, a *Sarcina* sp., a *Flavobacterium* sp., a *Bacillus* sp., an *Alcaligenes* sp., a *Micrococcus* sp., a *Serratia* sp., a *Klebsiella* spp., a *Streptococcus* sp., a *Herellea* sp., a *Corynebacterium* sp., a *Mycoplasma* sp., a *Pseudomonas* sp., a *Citrobacter* sp., a *Treponema* sp., a *Salmonella* sp., *Serratia marcescens*, *Yersinia enterocolitica*, a *Legionella* sp., a *Bartonella* sp., and a *Brucella* sp..

17 (canceled)

18 (previously presented): The method of claim 12, wherein the bacterium is *Staphylococcus epidermidis*.

19-28 (canceled)

29 (previously presented): The method of claim 1, wherein the microspheres are fluorescent.

30-33 (canceled)

34 (previously presented): The method of claim 1, wherein the antibodies or antibody fragments are fluorescent.

35 (canceled)

36 (previously presented): The method of claim 1, wherein the microsphere-solution/suspension mixture is evaluated on a hanging drop slide.

37 (previously presented): The method of claim 1, wherein the microsphere-solution/suspension mixture is evaluated with a microscope.

38 (canceled)

39 (previously presented): The method of claim 1, wherein the microsphere-solution/suspension mixture is evaluated with an instrument that measures light scattering.

40 (canceled)

41 (previously presented): The method of claim 1, wherein the microsphere-solution/suspension mixture is evaluated visually with the naked eye.

42 (previously presented): The method of claim 1, further comprising applying the microsphere-solution/suspension mixture to a gel surface then subjecting the gel with the microsphere-solution/suspension mixture to centrifugation before the evaluation step, wherein substantial retardation of movement of the microspheres after centrifugation when compared to the microspheres without the solution indicates the presence of agglutination.

43-58 (canceled)

59 (previously presented): A method of detecting at least one of at least n microorganism species in an aqueous solution or suspension, the method comprising
mixing the solution or suspension with microspheres coated with n distinct antibodies or antibody fragments comprising an antigen binding site, wherein each of the n distinct antibodies or antibody fragments comprising an antigen binding site is selective for the one of the n microorganism species, and wherein microspheres coated with antibodies or antibody fragments comprising an antigen binding site selective for each of the n microorganism species is present, to create a microsphere-solution/suspension mixture; then
evaluating the microsphere-solution/suspension mixture for agglutination, wherein the presence of agglutination indicates that the solution or suspension contains at least one of the n microorganism species.

60-89 (canceled)